

AMP: AMHERST MASTER PLAN LIGHTING THE FUTURE



HISTORIC and CULTURAL RESOURCES

WANT: Voice of Amherst¹:

- *“Our historic buildings and landscapes help define our town character.”*
- *“Amherst’s tree-shaded winding roads and stone walls add to the town’s character and need protection.”*
- *“Amherst Village has the feeling and look of the type of development we’d like to see throughout Amherst.”*
- *“Truck and fast-moving car traffic through the town and Village have made the pedestrian environment unsafe.”*
- *“The development of big-box stores and strip malls along Route 101A has detracted from Amherst’s historic and rural character.”*
- *“Amherst’s rural land seems to be disappearing and residential subdivisions seem to be appearing everywhere. Development is not controlled. Amherst is not a rural town anymore – it is a suburb.”*

HAVE: Existing Conditions²:

- A well-preserved late 18th and early 19th century era village with many historic buildings surrounding a central common
- Buildings representing several historic architectural styles
- The oldest public burial ground in New Hampshire
- The birthplace of Horace Greeley
- Natural beauty, open space and agricultural lands surrounding the Village
- Scenic roads shaded by tunnels of trees
- Many historic barns serving as reminders of the town’s agricultural past
- Miles of stone walls trailing through woodlands

¹ Resident input, based on various visioning exercises.

² Consultant documentation, based on review of previous studies, interviews, meetings, site visits.

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- An excellent public library with an array of resources and long hours of operation
- Dark night skies – a lack of light pollution
- Beauty of scenic roads disturbed by truck and fast-moving car traffic
- An unsafe pedestrian and bike environment in the Village area and beyond
- A sprawling commercial corridor (Route 101A) that visually conflicts with the town's character

MAIN ISSUES: Opportunities & Challenges:

- Need to restore the character of the Village, including removal of utilities, elimination of excess asphalt, installing appropriate street lighting, and other measures as defined in the approved town hall environs improvement plan
- Need to reduce truck traffic in the Village
- Need to restore safety for pedestrians in the Village
- Need to develop design guidelines/standards for Route 101A development
- Need to revisit/refine landscape requirements within existing zoning regulations
- Need to improve safety along Amherst's roads
- Need to expand Amherst's inventory of historic resources and place additional significant properties on the National Register of Historic Places
- Need to expand residents' knowledge of history and culture through public programs (sponsored jointly by local cultural organizations)